



NEWS FROM NOAA

NATIONAL OCEANIC & ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION • US DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

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NOAA AWARDS \$220,000 TO CALIFORNIA COASTKEEPER ALLIANCE FOR KELP RESTORATION

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration awarded a \$220,000 grant to California Coastkeeper Alliance to help restore portions of Southern California's underwater giant kelp forests. The award kicks off the second year of a three-year restoration effort between the alliance and NOAA's Community-based Restoration Program to implement kelp restoration projects that benefit a wide variety of marine resources.

California Coastkeeper Alliance and its member organizations along the Southern California Bight will work with the NOAA Restoration Center to identify appropriate sites for kelp habitat restoration projects and continue marine education outreach. One-fourth of California's marine life, including the threatened bocaccio, giant black sea bass, and sea otters, are dependent on large, stable kelp beds. Human impacts have degraded kelp forests, making it difficult for them to recover after large storms and warm water El Niño events. Through the Southern California Regional Kelp Restoration Project, the alliance and NOAA are helping to restore this vital marine habitat.

"The continued partnership between NOAA and the California Coastkeeper Alliance demonstrates our joint commitment to restore fisheries habitat," said retired Navy Vice Adm. Conrad C. Lautenbacher, Ph.D., under secretary of commerce for oceans and atmosphere and NOAA administrator. "These habitat restoration efforts are concrete examples of how a broad cooperative approach can enhance environmental restoration and education in a way that encourages citizen stewardship of the habitats that sustain the nation's fishery resources."

The renewed partnership between California Coastkeeper Alliance and NOAA follows the establishment of a joint venture between the Alliance and the state Coastal Conservancy, which recently approved a matching grant for the Kelp Project of \$600,000, supported by bond funds.

The Kelp Restoration Project, initiated in 2001 with a grant from NOAA's Community-based Restoration Program and donations from foundations, local businesses and private donors, has been highly successful. In addition to improving kelp restoration science, the project has engaged hundreds of volunteer SCUBA divers, who participate in restoration and monitoring of Southern California kelp beds. Over 4,500 school children have directly participated in the project's education program.

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Formed in 1999, the California Coastkeeper Alliance coordinates and supports the work of local California Waterkeeper programs and provides a statewide voice for safeguarding California's waters, and its world-renowned coast and ocean, for the benefit of all Californians and California's future. Ten individual Waterkeepers spanning the coast from Humboldt Bay to San Diego comprise the Alliance; the Southern California members include the San Diego Baykeeper, Santa Monica Baykeeper, Ventura Coastkeeper and Santa Barbara Channelkeeper.

The NOAA Restoration Center Community-based Restoration Program (CRP) is a financial and technical assistance program that promotes strong partnerships at the national, regional, and local level to restore fisheries habitat. NOAA CRP works with organizations and government to support locally driven habitat restoration projects in marine, estuarine, and riparian areas. NOAA CRP funds on-the-ground habitat restoration projects that (1) offer educational and social benefits for citizens and their communities, and (2) provide long-term ecological benefits for fishery resources. Since 1996, more than 900 projects in 26 states have been implemented using NOAA funding and leveraged funding from national and regional habitat restoration partners.

Each year, NOAA awards approximately \$900 million in grants to members of the academic, scientific, and business communities to assist the agency in fulfilling its mission to study the Earth's natural systems in order to predict environmental change, manage ocean resources, protect life and property, and provide decision makers with reliable scientific information. NOAA goals and programs reflect a commitment to these basic responsibilities of science and service to the nation for the past 35 years.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, an agency of the U.S. Commerce Department, is dedicated to enhancing economic security and national safety through the prediction and research of weather and climate-related events and providing environmental stewardship of our nation's coastal and marine resources. Through the emerging Global Earth Observation System of Systems (GEOSS), NOAA is working with our federal partners and nearly 60 countries to develop a global Earth observation network that is as integrated as the planet it observes, predicts and protects.

On the Web:

NOAA: <http://www.noaa.gov>.

Community-based Restoration Program: <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/habitat/restoration>

California Coastkeeper Alliance: <http://www.cacoastkeeper.org>.